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"... ITS MANY OTHER UGLY FEATURES NOTWITHSTANDING"

Careful study, one feels, should every so often be given to H.P.B.'s Letters to the American Conventions. The advice given there is imperatively needed, perhaps today more than ninety years ago when they were written. They give balanced direction to our thought, perspective to our vision, wisdom to our enterprise. It could be said that in a psychological way they contain as much trenchant teaching as the occult ideas in her great works. And, as we regard the sweep of influence of the Theosophical Movement, they have been neglected, not so much perhaps in their printing and reading as in their living. We take a single thought from the first Message.

"Orthodoxy in Theosophy," declares H.P.B., "is a thing neither possible nor desirable. It is diversity of opinion, within certain limits, that keeps the Theosophical Society a living and a healthy body . . ." *Diversity of opinion*—as surely as there are thinkers there will be that; but then she adds warningly, "its many other ugly features notwithstanding."

There we have it placed squarely before us, a paradox. And a paradox, as you know, is an assertion seemingly contradictory or opposed to common sense but which yet may be true in fact. Freedom of expression (within the bounds of kindly speech). Freedom from dogma. Then, why in a Society such as the T.S. may one not believe in *anything at all*? Where is the line of division between acceptance-of-anything and a rigid orthodoxy? Most may agree that the answer is that Theosophy is—Theosophy, and not something else. And Theosophy is a definite body of teaching about Man and the Universe, the reporting of the behavior or workings of Nature, loosely called Nature's laws. We recognize these teachings as truth about things-as-they-are, tested, we are told, by countless generations of sages and advanced beings. We respond and accept that vision-in-the-large. At the same time, since it is through the individual human brain that these Great Ideas filter and are received, we recognize the inevitability, indeed the necessity, of diversity. As H.P.B. writes further: "Were it not, also, for the existence of a large amount of uncertainty in the minds of students of Theosophy, such healthy divergencies would be impossible, and the Society would degenerate into a sect, in which a narrow and stereotyped creed would take the place of the living and breathing spirit of Truth and an ever growing Knowledge." Thus she makes strong the case against orthodoxy. On such ideas as karma, how it works; un-

merited suffering, why?; the after-death states of the ego in Kâma-loka and Devachan; great time-periods of the Rounds and Races; the awakening in mankind of self-consciousness, the light of Mind—on these ideas and others we might say there is acceptance in general, and the healthy diversity of individual coloring and interpretation in details and particulars.

But what of the "ugly features?" Does that diversity open doors to acceptance of actual distortion of teaching, pawned off on an inquiring public as the Theosophy of the Masters? We are in a cycle similar to the dawning years of the Christian era, the Fish Age. Now in the Aquarian beginnings, tumultuous in opportunity, shall the Movement go the same way, with emphasis on psychic vagaries, in vestures and outer trappings and the shell, while the reality, "the living and breathing spirit of Truth", fades away sought by the relative few? And when it comes to theosophical principles, is it an agreeable complacency that is preferred tolerant of the pull and trend of the times and hesitant of determined stand? We need not speak here of the sad weight of past error of this kind. But today, as interest grows in the transcendental and occult, and the wildest ideas are seized upon as genuine occult revelation, is there not urgency for Theosophists to make clear what Theosophy is, at least to *not* state what it is not? If, as H.P.B. declares, Theosophy is the source from which the religions of the future will be born, if "it alone can furnish the beaconlight needed to guide humanity on its true path," what then is our duty?

Perhaps we should leave it at that. What an individual believes is his own choosing. We would not intrude. What he holds most sacred can only be known

MEDITATIONS—5

Do innocence; take heed before thou act;
Nor ere let soft sleep upon thine eyelids steal
Until the day's acts thou hast three times scanned;
What have I done? What done amiss? What left
unwrought?

Go over the whole account, nor aught omit.
If evil, chide thee; if good, rejoice.
This do, this meditate, this ever love,
And it will lead thee into Wisdom's Path.

—Golden Verses of Pythagoras

to that Inner Self seeking ever for growth and awakening. But when thought and action, publications and propaganda, affect the world's understanding of just what Theosophy really is and represents, then there is a larger duty. Karmic circumstances, different for each, have created natural ties of respect and affection and gratitude to those who have been bringers of light to individuals and groups. But beyond those immediate loyalties is the greater loyalty to that very Light itself. Let that Light not be blurred or distorted or shadowed. Let that Light shine!

—W.E.S.

THE WORLD'S TROUBLE AND ITS CURE

G. DE PURUCKER

Extracts from an extempore talk given in the Temple at Point Loma, California, in 1938, and later published in *Wind of the Spirit*. Though four decades have since passed, marked by wars and violence and repression to the human spirit of the most searing kind, the simple direction of thought here pointed to still remains, in a global sense, neglected. And, we may ask, how much even very largely so in our own individual lives?—Eds.

What is the trouble with the world today? It is this: the desperate desires that men have to make other men accept their views. That was and has been the trouble with the Occident since the downfall of Paganism. It was the scandal of the Christian Church—and I say it with reverence for the many noble hearts who have lived in and brightened that Church with their lives. The great fault of men from the time of the downfall of Rome in all the European countries, and in these two continents of ours, has been the desperate effort of men to force other men to think as they do—in religion, in politics, in society, it matters not what.

It is this which has lighted the pyres of the martyrs. It is this which has sent murdering, marauding bands out for the killing of other men. It is this which has made and signed treaties, and imposed them on nations. It is this which troubles us today. You see it in our social relations among ourselves. Western men and women do not seem to be happy unless they are trying with more or less success to impose their will upon others, their thoughts, their ideas of what is right: the way the world should be run, the way things should be done, and especially the way other men should believe and feel. And when you realize how greatly we men value the sanctuary of our own hearts, the freedom of our own lives, and our right to think freely, you can see how tragical the consequences always are.

Why, I have seen the same evil strain running even through the minds of Theosophists who seem to think other Theosophists are all on the wrong path because they do not accept *their* opinions. Theosophically, this is simply repeating the same old evil desire to make the other fellow think as you do.

Now, try as you may, you cannot completely succeed in this. You can kill men, you can shackle their bodies, you can defile and distort their minds and their hearts.

But you cannot enchain the human soul. It will break free. And then the same old tragedy is repeated. It is pathetic; and the pathos of it lies mainly not so much in the great human suffering brought about but in the immense loss to humankind of the treasures repressed and defeated in the hearts and minds of others. Think! What is more beautiful than for a man to study the mind of his friend or his fellow, to bring out what is there, to see it grow, to see unfolded the treasures of thought? This is productive. The other is destructive. The one enriches the treasures of human thought and human feeling; it brings about gentleness and peace and mildness in man's dealings with each other. The other brings about hatred and suspicion and a seething resentment and urge to throw off the slavery of imposed beliefs, or ideas or forms.

And do you know why all this happens? Simply because men, most of them, are unensouled. I do not mean they have no souls; but their souls are not active, are not working, are not productive. They are asleep. And thus men and women mostly live like human animals; in fact, worse; because animals are governed more or less by an instinct which holds some measure of respect for other animals; but men have planning and tricky minds; and when planning and tricky minds are endowed with reason, we have tyranny, religious, social, political, any kind. We have, I say, tyranny: the attempt by minority, or by majority, or the one upon the many, or the many upon the one, to impose ideas and thoughts and modes of conduct to which others must submit—and we call it the "freedom of the Occident"!

Freedom! One of heaven's most blessed gifts and the one that we Occidentals have most outrageously abused, for we have considered that to gain freedom is the causing of other men to accept our beliefs, is the obliging of other men to accept our institutions and our ways of doing things. And the result: the crushing down of the flowering of millions of human souls which otherwise would have produced abundantly, brought forth nobly their contribution to the enrichment of our common human treasury.

Am I revolutionary in these ideas? Never. For that would be just myself trying to repeat the moral crimes I speak of, trying to impose my views upon others. Evolutionary? Yes! Appealing to human hearts and minds always to remember that they can never be ultimately happy, or produce their best, or allow their fellow men to produce their best, if they fight others. It never has worked. It never will. It is against the laws of human nature. It is against all the laws of psychology, both the higher and the lower. It is a man's duty to obey the laws of his country. No matter what country it is, no matter what laws it may have, as long as he lives in it he should be obedient to its laws. But let him in his own life be an example of an ensouled man, and if he die a martyr in the cause of justice, the world will hear of his example and it will be, like the old Christian said, "the Seed of the Church"; for it is a curious fact in human psychological thought, that

even though a man die in a poor cause it is a seed of propaganda.

The greatest wisdom in human life as taught by the Masters of Wisdom is sympathy for the souls of men, and making your own life an example of what you preach: justice, brotherly love, sympathy, pity, compassion, helpfulness, refraining from doing any unjust act to whomever it may be. Your example will be followed by others because you will stand out like a beacon light on a dark night. . . .

Therefore, in my judgment if men and women would follow the simple rule of ceasing to try to impose their views on other men, ninety-nine per cent of the world's misery, suffering, bloodshed, crime, would cease; for the rule runs through all human relationships.

U.L.T. Series of Blavatsky Pamphlets

The Theosophy Company (ULT) of Los Angeles (245 W. 33rd St.) has issued the thirty-seventh and last of the series of articles by H. P. Blavatsky which have been appearing from their press in recent years. Grouped under subject headings and with editorial forewords by the ULT compiler and editor, they make a most valuable library of occult teaching, in convenient pamphlet size and available for 75 cents each. This last issue contains HPB's articles, *The New Cycle*, *The Last Song of the Swan*, and *Premature and Phenomenal Growths*. We quote here the ULT Foreword.—Eds.

The first issue of the French Theosophical magazine, *La Revue Théosophique*, dated March 21, 1889, was launched by H.P.B. with a strong editorial titled "The New Cycle," the meaning of which becomes clear from what she says in this occultly explicit statement of the character and purpose of the Theosophical Movement. The editorial repeats ideas which she had earlier expressed in articles in the *Theosophist* (such as "What Is Theosophy?" and "What Are the Theosophists?"—reprinted in the pamphlet, *Basic Questions*), but, written ten years later, goes beyond these discussions in its emphasis on the critical nature of the cycles, making a moving appeal to students to recognize and fulfill the responsibilities they have assumed. Addressing both inquirers and Theosophical students, H.P.B. seems to be speaking not only of that particular time (two years before her death) but also of the larger cycle encompassing our own present and the years to come. In this article H.P.B. gave warning of the exhaustion of the resources of modern materialism, predicting for believers in the "material shell" alone the keenest of disappointments.

"The Last Song of the Swan," published in *Lucifer* for February, 1890, gives insight into the mysterious cause of sudden epidemics of influenza, describing the ruthless impact of this ill through the centuries, and confirming the speculations of some physicians and chemists who connect ozone with its sudden outbreak in various parts of the world. From this subject H.P.B. turns to the self-sacrificing work of Sister Rose Gertrude, a young woman who had decided to continue the work of Father Damien in behalf of the lepers on the island of Molokai. She calls Sister Gertrude "a true

Theosophist in daily life and practice," remarking that she "is not only a great and saintly heroine, but also a spiritual mystery, an Eco not to be fathomed on merely intellectual or even psychic lines." The limitation of reasoning powers caused by "training and religious education," H.P.B. suggests, impedes but little the high egoic expression of the inner Individuality, which in compassionate service to those who suffer rises far above ordinary "religious" duty.

"Premature and Phenomenal Growths," which appeared in the *Theosophist* for December-January, 1883-84, is of particular importance for the light it throws on the future course of psycho-physical evolution, and for the hints which help to explain what seem incongruous anomalies from any other point of view. In *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 445) H.P.B. refers to "peculiar children" who will be regarded as "abnormal oddities physically and mentally." In this article she discusses instances of such children, going on to speak of future changes in racial types, including color and longevity, along with more rapid maturation. Premonitory symptoms of these changes, eventually to become the rule, she says, "are but so many more proofs of the end of one cycle and—the beginning of another."

With this pamphlet—the thirty-seventh in the H.P.B. series—present publication of the major articles and periodical writings of H. P. Blavatsky comes to a close. The series makes no pretense at being "complete." With some few exceptions, the articles gathered and reprinted in these pamphlets have been those which have appeared—some of them several times—in past issues of THEOSOPHY, it being felt that these constitute the essential study materials for serious students, complementing the contents of H.P.B.'s books. It is planned, eventually, to issue these articles in book form, to make three volumes, compactly published for easy accessibility and frequent use. The pamphlets will be maintained in print because of their convenience for use with inquirers.

AND WE QUOTE . . .

"THE HIGHEST PHILOSOPHY"—OR?

Phenomenal elements, previously unthought of—undreamt of—will soon begin manifesting themselves day by day with constantly augmented force, and disclose at last the secrets of their mysterious workings. Plato was right: *ideas* rule the world; and, as men's minds will receive *new ideas*, laying aside the old and effete, the world will advance: mighty revolutions will spring from them; creeds and even powers will crumble before their onward march crushed by the irresistible force. It will be just as impossible to resist their influx, when the time comes, as to stay the progress of the tide. But all this will come gradually on, and before it comes we have a duty set before us; that of sweeping away as much as possible the dross left to us by our pious fore-

fathers. New ideas have to be planted on clean places, for these ideas touch upon the most momentous subjects. It is not physical phenomena but these universal ideas that we study, as to comprehend the former, we have to first understand the latter. They touch man's true position in the universe, in relation to his previous and future births; his origin and ultimate destiny; the relation of the mortal to the immortal; of the temporary to the eternal; of the finite to the infinite; ideas larger, grander, more comprehensive, recognizing the universal reign of Immutable Law, unchanging and unchangeable in regard to which there is only an ETERNAL NOW, while to uninitiated mortals time is past or future as related to their finite existence on this material speck of dirt. This is what we study and what many have solved.

And now it is your province to decide which will you have: the highest philosophy or simple exhibitions of occult powers.

—*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*,
extract from Letter No. VI, received at
Allahabad about December 10th, 1880

The Wave of Insane Psychism

The most serious danger facing the Theosophical Movement in any part of today's world is the wild proliferation of psychism, in all its many forms. It is imperative that genuine work of our spiritual and intellectual movement be adequately protected from this menace. Warnings about it, and ways to meet it abound in H. P. Blavatsky's writings and in those of many other Theosophists.

It is therefore a matter of grave concern to observe the spread in various lodges and centers of The Theosophical Society of programs and seminars about psychic powers, magical forces, flying saucers, curious and outlandish subjects dealing with the psychic nature of man, lower forms of yoga, kundalini, and what not—instead of the basic teachings of Theosophy, the fundamental principles of our ancient wisdom, of which, unfortunately, very many members of the Society are often ignorant.

If The Theosophical Society does not make an imperatively needed change in this trend, it could very easily be submerged in a few years from now in a wave of insane *psychism* and find itself unable to ride the crest of the wave of the future—which is a spiritual wave, and to lead the intellectual awakening of humanity into spirituality. Where psychism is rampant, spirituality flies out the window, evicted by man's folly.

We must never hesitate to proclaim that one of the main purposes in founding The Theosophical Society was to stem the onrushing tide of psychism. Unless the organized movement succeeds in so doing, it may not outlive the century.

—BORIS DE ZIRKOFF in an address to the
Theosophical Centenary World Congress,
New York. November 1975

The Meaning of 'Eclectic'

Theosophia shines through the rays of science, religion, and philosophy, illuminating them; one reaches through these sunrays towards the apex-Sun itself, which is Truth. Now, Theosophy has sometimes been called a synthesis of these aspects. But this does not mean that it draws from, or selects from, these and thus produces a syncretistic system of thought congenial to all. It is the other way around: they draw from it; they merge into the crowning Source. In so far as religion, philosophy, and science reflect purely that Source-Light, in that degree of purity are they carriers of Truth.

"You will see where this leads in relation to our own *Eclectic Theosophist*. It chooses, it selects, it draws from many theosophical sources; but it seeks to show that the best in those selections is what most faithfully reflects the Primal Source, the Sunlight of the Spirit, which is their innermost and derivative funnel of inspiration. Our aim and object is to show that it is in the original teachings of Theosophy as given by H. P. Blavatsky under the guidance and inspiration of her Teachers, and in the contributions of those whose studies and researches follow along these traditional lines, in some instances reinforcing and supporting them—it is in these that we shall today find that which is nearest Truth."

—*The Eclectic Theosophist*, No. 7, Dec. 21, 1971,
"Speaking Out": *What is Your
Understanding of 'Eclectic'?*

CENTENARY: "ISIS UNVEILED"

B. R. MULLIK

We are late in referring our readers to articles about H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* contained in the September 1977 issue of *The Theosophist* (Adyar, Madras, India). In fact the whole issue is devoted to this subject, including commentary by James S. Perkins in "On the Watch-Tower", "The Truth Stands Revealed" by B. R. Mullik, "Isis, The Virgin of the World" by Manly Palmer Hall, "H.P.B.—A Profile of Those Days" by Alexander Wilder, M.D., extracts from *Old Diary Leaves* by H. S. Olcott, and from H.P.B. herself, writing about "My Books". In addition there are timely reviews of the day (from the Scrapbook of H.P.B.) from *The New York Evening Mail*, and the *New York Herald*, of September 23 and 30, 1877 respectively. We quote here B. R. Mullik's introductory paragraphs.—Ebs.

Whereas the founding of the Theosophical Society on the 17th of November, 1875, was the first landmark of its movement, the publication of *Isis Unveiled* on the 29th of September, 1877, the first book of the Theosophical Society, written by H. P. Blavatsky, was the second landmark. We are happy to designate the September issue of *The Theosophist* as the Centenary Number of *Isis Unveiled*, and dedicate it to the loving memory of H.P.B. and Col. Olcott, who was her collaborator in this great task.

Isis Unveiled, with its sub-title: 'A master-key to the Mysteries of ancient and modern science and theology,' was an epoch-making book. It created a revolution in the thought of the Nineteenth Century. It was hailed

by the contemporary press as 'one of the greatest productions of thought in modern times;' '. . . one of the most intelligible and intelligent books of the age we live in'; '. . . a most fascinating and remarkable production of the century'; '. . . one that has struck terror to the souls of modern philosophers and scientists'; '. . . one that has proved its author entitled to be placed in the front rank of the profound thinkers of the day.' Within a week the entire first edition of the book of about 1400 pages was exhausted. The readers were struck by the vigor of H. P. Blavatsky's 'majestic intellect, the force of her reasoning and the immense range of her experience.' Besides bouquets, many brickbats were also thrown at the author, who was merciless in her attacks on all that was sham, fake, and pretentious in contemporary science and religion.

Though *Isis Unveiled* ran into several editions during the lifetime of H.P.B., its reputation waned, and was eclipsed by her second book, *The Secret Doctrine*, published in 1888. Whereas several commentaries and critical explanations of *The Secret Doctrine* have appeared, no theosophical scholar has made any serious attempt to 'unveil' *Isis Unveiled*. Many have a mistaken idea that *The Secret Doctrine* replaced it. The fact is that only 30 pages were incorporated into the later book, and *Isis Unveiled* still stands as a separate classic of the Theosophical Society.

We do hope that the publication of this issue marking the centenary of this most remarkable book will attract the attention of general readers as well as scholars. It is the pioneer of theosophical literature.

DREAM OF A SNOWFLAKE

FRANCIS MERCHANT

The following is No. 40 of the second series of *Arcane Stories* by the author.—Eds.

Few people know that snowflakes emit tiny sounds that, when scientifically magnified, yield the equivalent of speech. What these small patterns say as they materialize out of the air and cover the Earth holds special interest for all persons who study natural phenomena.

The thoughts of a snowflake that fell in the Rocky Mountains on the very first day of this year have been recorded for us by scientific instruments of the rarest delicacy. We have not yet reached the stage where we can converse with such units of snow, but that may come in time. Let us listen to the snowflake's account of its journey to Earth.

"I was once a common drop of water that had high aspirations—so high that I rose in consciousness to the sky and found myself floating on a cloud. At that altitude, far from the hurly-burly of earthly activities, life is very calm and serene. Looking down, I saw the multitudes that populate the Earth, moving hither and yon, wrapped up in their usual small endeavors, un-

aware of the wider world of Space that stretches out illimitably beyond them. I longed to make them aware that they lived in a universe that was patterned and beautiful and that the wonder of its greatness is concealed in the tiniest things.

"And so I began my pilgrimage from cloud to Earth, and on the way I consulted the icy wind that transformed me from a droplet into a hexagonal snowflake of pure whiteness. On a cushion of air I slid downward. Softly I landed, making no sound as I alighted. Here I was, a presented symbol, changing the very color of the world by my presence. What human being, seeing me, could refrain from comprehending that the ultimate pattern is beauty, and all of Earth's variegated colors are summed up in the pristine unity of whiteness? It has been said that I impede the activities of men, and it is true, but I do so to remind them that there is nothing more important to contemplate than the wonder and beauty that fall gratuitously from heaven to Earth."

BOOK REVIEWS

The American Theosophist, Fall Special Issue 1977, Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, 52 pp. \$1.50.

The general subject of this number, "Esoteric Traditions of the West," offers a wide sweep of interpretation. The editor's introductory words make it clear that the Esoteric Tradition is, itself, "an immutable canon of universal laws and principles which has been, since the inception of humanity, a subject of intense study and speculation, and, in rare but cyclic instances, understanding and application by enlightened individuals." There is, he points out, inherent in it a living power; but the multiplicity of systems exhibits differences of forms, and that where 'form' supersedes 'life' it loses its validity. He explains, further, that for the purposes of this special issue, the subject refers to the areas of Europe, Asia Minor and the Mediterranean, from approximately the Birth of Christ to the present.

The ways in which the contributors handle their themes makes for rich and varied reading. Not all the writers confine themselves exclusively to the West. Dane Rudhyar's "Tradition and Illusions" has an overall universal application. He would erase the current lines of demarcation—temporal, racial, spatial, and so on. "The actual historic as well as esoteric situation can be truly understood only from a 'planetary' viewpoint." The Earth is an organism, he points out, and one of the fundamental purposes of the message brought by H. P. Blavatsky was to dispel the illusion of separatism between East and West in occult matters.

Nevill Drury's article "Mythology and Consciousness: the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and its Relevance to the Present Occult Revival" has been given

prominence by being chosen to open the series. Though it contains interesting comment on the approach of science to semi-occult matters, i.e., Kirlian photography, Pyramid power, astral projection, and telepathic states of consciousness, there is no attempt, and apparently no wish, to give a danger signal here. We quote from H. P. Blavatsky's *Occultism and the Occult Arts* her forceful words: "There is not in the West half-a-dozen among the fervent hundreds who call themselves 'Occultists' who have even an approximately correct idea of the nature of the Science they seek to master. With a few exceptions they are all on the highway to sorcery." This is clear and needed warning for all who may study magic, method, and technique of the Golden Dawn. It is well known in informed circles that Aleister Crowley, perhaps its most prominent member, was an advocate and practitioner of what is correctly and technically called 'black magic'.

Perhaps the keynote of Robert S. Elwood's thoughtful article, "Comparative Religion as a Western Esoteric Tradition", is conveyed in his words: "One must give up—perhaps painfully—the distorting lens of his own egocentricity in order to know more subtly and feel more deeply the lines of inner force running round the globe. . . . It is an act of empathy, 'feeling with' in the profoundest sense."

The reader is fortunate in having as a representative of the brilliant galaxy of Renaissance men, a study of the greatest of them all, Paracelsus. W. Emmett Small declares at the outset that this controversial thinker cannot be placed exclusively as belonging to either the East or the West, for he is universal. The author packs into a few paragraphs an impressive array of information and esoteric suggestion on this fascinating figure. We are offered possibly all available references in older and modern literature, and are invited to consider carefully the scattered statements of H.P.B. in order to evaluate Paracelsus justly. H.P.B. called Paracelsus "the greatest occultist of the Middle Ages . . . a clairvoyant of great powers, one of the most learned and erudite philosophers and mystics, and a distinguished alchemist." The present article is enhanced by an excellent map of his extensive 'peregrinations'.

The brilliant group of Neoplatonists has not been neglected. In "Theosophy A.D. 180 to 529," R. I. Robb invites us to at least glimpse this famous group of philosophers, not forgetting their forebears Plato and Pythagoras in whose footsteps they trod and from whom they inherited the system of deductive thinking—a system patterned after Nature's own laws—proceeding from the ultimate unknowable Oneness to infinity and complexity. For a while—and as far as our imagination and intuitions will take us—we visit Alexandria and the great men whose names are so closely linked with that center of learning: Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, and learn something of their knowledge. But it all passes like a vision with the murder of the girl philosopher, Hypatia. The article closes with these words: "The idea of the perfectibility of man, of the brotherhood of men and all nature, the

unity of all nature, the eastern origin of truth in its highest form, were the trademark of these early and perhaps highest known Theosophists—the Neoplatonists."

Lack of space prohibits comment on a number of interesting studies. "The Jewish Esoteric Tradition"—Mysticism overcome by exotericism; "Reincarnation in Western Literature"—a chapter from a forthcoming Quest book; "The Essenes in Esoteric Perspective"—a subject of perennial interest since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls; "Cathedral of Chartres"—a sacred place of Celtic worship before the Christian era; a short but perceptive article on "Silesius, the Temporary Mystic"; "Symbolic Systems in Western Occultism—Use and Abuse"; and "The Master Keys of Ancient Egypt."

Finally, there is a natural human interest in the Biographical Notes, which indicate that our writers are proficient in a number of professional disciplines, and have not emerged from ivory towers.

—HELEN TODD

MUSIC FORMS, by Geoffrey Hodson. Theosophical Publishing Co., Madras, India, 1976, 35 pages, profusely illustrated.

This elaborately illustrated book recalls the vogue of color music in the 1920's among theosophical readers. The scientific world remained unimpressed by claims of a superphysical effect of music on matter. In recent years Kirlian photography gives credence and plausibility to the existence of invisible configurations. But science, always intrusive, insists on replication and repeated verification of an initial experiment. It is not apparent that Mr. Hodson has done this in case of color music. It is the merit of J. B. Rhine of Duke University to induce, or rather force, science to accord clairvoyance and related psychic phenomena. The same objections to this interesting book could be made, and were, against the pioneer work of William Denton, the geological psychometrist. His work is now duplicated in Canada.

The author asks, "May not the time come when instruments of research of greater sensitivity and responsiveness be developed?" He goes on to say the present time is of interest because the sixth sense (ESP) is now just beginning to show itself to a marked degree. The implication here is that ESP is subject to evolution also, though we know it is based not in the supraliminal mind but in the subliminal consciousness. The law of evolution or natural selection has no power on the plane of the subconscious self, as Ernest Bozzana established in his classic studies of the subliminal mind.

The first section of the book contains some beautiful illustrations of "The Sculpture of Vibrations" with an account of cymatics, a new concept of the Swiss Scientist and artist Dr. Hans Jenny. In these interesting studies we see the first adumbrations of the principle on which the phonograph was produced.

The music was under the guidance of Dr. Gordon Kingsley of Beverly Hills Church in California. He has an interesting comment on Bach's Prelude in C Sharp Minor.

Geoffrey Hodson, author of a score of theosophical books needs no introduction to T.S. readers who will enjoy this latest study in color music.—

—BERNHARD MOLLENHAUER

Golden Threads in the Tapestry of History by Kenneth Morris, Point Loma Publications, Inc., softcover 246 pp. Index, \$4.75.

The author, a professor of history, lived from 1879 to 1937. From 1908 to 1930 he was in the U.S.A., and intimately connected with Point Loma. The articles composing this book were published in its magazine, *The Path*, 1915-16. In this, he preceded what may be called two other new-age historians: H. G. Wells, whose *Outline of History* appeared in 1920, and Arnold Toynbee, whose course of lectures given at the Lowell Institute, in Boston, and Northwestern University, Evanston, 1933, finally flowered into the colossal 12-volume *Study of History*.

It was mentioned, in connection with *Golden Threads* that it was a pity H. G. Wells did not study under Professor Morris before he produced the *Outline*, but it would have been far more to the point if Toynbee had had that opportunity. Wells was the first writer of world-wide fame to produce a one-man history of our globe, but there was no attempt to extract an overall pattern and the laws that administered it. It was Toynbee who did that, which is why he is definitely a new-age historian. He has no time for Theosophy, and says so, but Theosophical students can find a great deal in his work that appeals to them, as his immense erudition can place great numbers of parallels side by side for profitable examination, in the same way as H. P. Blavatsky did with regard to her own subject in *The Secret Doctrine*. This was why it would have been more pertinent to wish that Toynbee had been in Morris's classes; his attitude towards history would have suited better what Morris had to give.

Golden Threads could be described as using the Toynbee method for an outline of world history considered from the Theosophical angle. It includes the teaching of reincarnation, which Toynbee's *Study* lacks. Morris obviously had an amazing grasp of the total history, but he enclosed his treasure in just a few short magazine articles, which makes for congestion. If, however, an interested student could combine the information in the *Study of History* with the root-knowledge contained in *Golden Threads*, he would bring forth a world history worthy of the Aquarian Age.

Meanwhile, we must be content with what we have got, so, if you buy this book, you will know that at least you are obtaining the forerunner of the history book of the future.

—Dudley Gower in *Theosophy in New Zealand*, Vol. 37, No. 2

ITEMS of INTEREST

Point Loma and its Publications

The following is quoted from the opening article of *Friends of the Library, University of California, San Diego*, NEWSLETTER, January 1978, No. 39:

"We are delighted to announce the long-awaited publication of Lauren R. Brown's bibliography *The Point Loma Theosophical Society: A List of Publications, 1898-1942*, sponsored by the Friends of the UCSD Library. The book [132 pages] is handsomely printed by the University Graphics and Reproduction Services, and the cover features a fine drawing of the Temple of Peace on Point Loma. . . .

"This bibliography is an important work in that it brings together for the first time a comprehensive list of materials that contributes to a clearer picture of a significant period in the history of San Diego. . . .

"The book is now available for \$4.00 [not \$3.75 as stated in *Eclectic* No. 43] (plus sales tax, postage and handling, if appropriate) from Alvina Robertson, Treasurer of the Friends, Central University C-075, University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California 92093.

"Lauren Brown worked for several years in the Mandeville Department of Special Collections in the UCSD Central Library and contributed much to its growth. He was awarded an M.A. in American History at the University of Washington and is now working toward a Master's in Library Science at UC Berkeley."

Readers of *The Eclectic Theosophist* will be interested to know that all, or nearly all, of the book and magazine items mentioned in this complete bibliography are available for study and research at the library of Point Loma Publications in Pacific Beach, San Diego, California.

And Point Loma History

Emmett A. Greenwalt's *California Utopia: Point Loma, 1897-1942* is now off the press (cloth \$9.95, softcover \$5.95). We regret delay in its publication and any inconvenience this may have caused initial purchasers, but we hope readers will be pleased when they hold the book in hand. For those to whom the Point Loma story comes newly, let us say this much: that what unfolds in these pages focuses on the theosophical effort at Point Loma, California—a veritable wilderness when it began—and describes how that unique effort, based on a sound theosophic approach to life and touching life's many segments, grew and flourished and affected in degree many centers of the world.

It depicts the life-history of Katherine Tingley, the dominant and directing factor in that building process, and of her successor G. de Purucker, and gives vignettes of the lives of their many distinguished supporters living at Point Loma who came not only from various part of the U.S.A. but from England, Wales, Scotland, Sweden, Holland, Germany, Cuba, Japan, and other countries.

Emmett A. Greenwalt, a native Californian, who recently retired with the rank of professor emeritus from twenty-five years' teaching history at California State University, Los Angeles, uses the historical approach in this volume. His sweep of documentation is impressive, drawn from rare archival material to which he had special access, and this revision contains added pages of valuable material and gleanings from personal interviews. It is doubtful if we go too far in stating that it will probably be regarded by future researchers as the most authentic and scholarly thorough source-material for a study of its kind.

B. de Zirkoff back from Adyar, writes about the S.D.

Returned from a five-week visit to the International Headquarters of the TS at Adyar, India, where he was warmly received by President John Coats and his staff, Boris de Zirkoff reports that work on the new edition of *The Secret Doctrine* is in high gear. He says it is to be a definitive edition of H.P.B.'s *magnum opus*, an integral part of the *Collected Writings*. (The Council of the Theosophical Publishing House—Adyar, London, Wheaton—decided three years ago not to reprint their present edition in six books but to return to the two-volume format of the original 1888 edition.)

"The new edition," writes Mr. de Zirkoff, "preserves unaltered H.P.B.'s own language throughout, and keeps to the original pagination. At least 90% of all quoted material and references given in footnotes have been checked with the original works from which they were cited, and corrected whenever necessary. A few additional references are given in footnotes, and these are enclosed in square brackets indicating they are additions by the Editor. All technical terms and proper names have been checked for accuracy of spelling, in whatever language they may occur.

"The new edition includes a large number of illustrations. Many are writers and scholars whom H.P.B. discusses in her text; others are of an astronomical nature and concern discoveries recently made by space probes. These latter were supplied by Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California, and illustrate some of H.P.B.'s hints and allusions of extra-terrestrial nature."

Mr. de Zirkoff adds that an entirely new Index and a complete bibliography have been prepared. They are being set up by Stockton Trade Press (Norwalk, California), and will be issued as a separate volume, so that the new edition will consist of the original two volumes plus the volume of the new Index. Volume I is printed and being bound. Volume II and the Index will be ready by the end of this year or early 1979. Price is yet to be determined.

Mr. de Zirkoff adds this appreciative comment: "The Vasanta Press at Adyar is to be congratulated for their careful handling of this difficult text, and for their know-how in solving many technical problems connected with the original pagination. It is of special interest to note that a great deal of their work is done *visually*, as many of those engaged in this work know

very little English, if any; but it seems to pose no major problem. The Vasanta Press is well equipped with several modern German Heidelberg presses and is spotlessly clean and neat in all its departments now housed in a newly-erected building."

Those Time-Periods Again

A further word might be added for those wishing to probe into some of the mathematical intricacies involving the riddles of cyclical time and the yugas. They may find interesting Swedish artist Hans Malmstedt's study, "Our Position in Time and Globe D" (*The Theosophical Path*, Vol. XLIII, No. 2, Oct. 1933). Another who has specialized in this area is J. J. Laughlin of Walla Walla, Washington, who in his charts called "The Golden Key" presents his findings on this and other theosophical teachings. Writes Mr. Laughlin, now in his ninth reading of *The Secret Doctrine*: "Any teaching mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine* can be placed on the charts of the Golden Key, and it will help to unlock many of the doors necessary in understanding the deeper teachings." The charts now number 30, and Point Loma Publications has a set in its library which can be borrowed by interested students.

In studying all these and other contributions from earnest students it would seem wise to bear in mind what the Mahâtmas themselves say—that when it comes to cycles certain keys regarding the subject of numbers are "missing"—and this for the protection of humanity. Perhaps it is well to leave the subject on that note.

From Letters Received

Emanuel Pekelis, M.D., Jasper, Alabama—In the December *American Theosophist* is an article ("Evolution of a Viewpoint") by Dorcas Carrithers, who quotes Joy Mills who allegedly declares that "Theosophy is not eclectic." Well, I have dozens of dictionaries and encyclopedias: not one of them is in agreement on the meaning of the word except for one thing—the *meaning varies*. It varies from: "deriving from multiple sources" to "springing from one single root"; from "covering many more or less orthodox or controversial subjects" to "strictly adhering to a single line of thought, in this being akin to catholicism and or orthodoxy"; from "heretical in the sense of non-conformism" to "rigidly conformist."

Apparently Mrs. Dorcas Carrithers had Joy Mills tell her what she (JM) had meant when using that word: "stemming and accommodating various, disparate, contradictory streams of thought in a rather superficial manner". But, as we see that is but one of its several meanings.

[For *Eclectic* editors' understanding of "Eclectic" see "And We Quote", this issue.]

CONTRIBUTIONS

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